

**A LETTER**  
**First written and sent by Io.**  
**FORBES,** Pastour of the English  
Church at *MIDDELBURGH*, vnto certen  
of the companie of Marchands Adventu-  
rers at *STOADE*, at their earnest desire,  
for resolving this Question :

**How a Christian man may discerne the**  
*testimonie of Gods spirit, from the testimonie*  
*of his owne spirit, in witnessing his Adoption.*

**And now againe renewed and enlarged by**  
the Authour, at the desire of diuers good Christians, for  
the comfort of their troubled cōsciēces, and published  
by those of his flocke, to whom he did dedicate  
it for the publike vse of the Church.

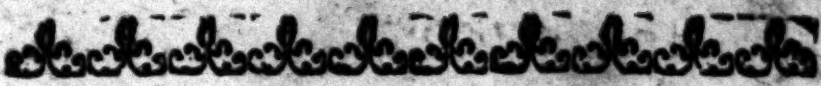
*Thy Rod and thy Staffe they comfort me, Psal. 23. 4.*




**AT MIDDELBURGH,**  
**Printed by Richard Schilders, 1616.**





  
To M<sup>r</sup> Edw. Bennet, M<sup>r</sup>.  
John Turner, and M<sup>r</sup> Ed. Kay,  
the Authour wisheth increase  
of all Spirituall blessing  
in Christ.

ECEYVE (beloved  
in the Lord) a cer-  
ten Letter, which  
above eight yecres  
ago, I first did write  
at the desire of M<sup>r</sup> Io. Scharpuls,  
now with God, and others of the  
companie then at Stoade, & now  
againc have reuewed and some-  
what enlarged the same, vpon oc-  
casion of the trouble of cōscience  
wherein I did perceyve manie  
good Christians to bee cast for

A 2      want

want of sufficiēt light in the same  
question which is heere handled,  
desiring to minister some com-  
fort vnto them, if it shall please  
God to blesse this my endeavour,  
in that measure of light which he  
hath given me: vse it, and if yee  
finde any fruit in it, impart it to  
such as have need. The spirit of  
comfort and true peace bee with  
you to the end. Iuli 20. 1616.

*Yours in the Lord*

*Io. Forbes.*



A short Discourse,  
shewing how a Christian  
may discerne the testimonie of  
Gods spirit from the testimonie  
of his owne spirit, in wit-  
nessing his Adop-  
tion.

*The same spirit beareth witness also to-  
gether with our spirit, that wee are the  
sonnes of God, Rom. 8. 16.*



ELOVED

in the Lord, you  
desired by your  
Letter at my de-  
parture frō *Stoad*,  
that I would re-

solve you, in that saying of the  
Apostle to the Rom. chap. 8. *The  
spirit of God beareth witness with our  
spirits, that we are the sonnes of God.*

A 3

How



6 Gods spirit in vs discerned

How a man may know when that spirit, doth beare witnes also with our spirit. The occasion moving you to inquire this, being ministred by some speech vttered by me in preaching : sayinge it was not enough for a man, that his own spirit do beare witnes alone.

First, I will shewe you the occasion wherefore I did say so : and next, I will doe my best to satisfie your question, as the Lord hath given me to vnderstand.

It is most certaine, that a mans owne heart (being a thing, as saith *Jeremie, Chap. 17. deccitfull above all things*) will oft times deceyve man him self, and yeeld him a false Testimonie of him selfe, as also of his actions and estate. Is it not said of the Angell of the Church of *Laodicea*: that he said of him self: *I am*  
*Reve. 3. 17* *rich & increased with goods, & have need of nothing.* This doubtles was  
his

his owne testimonie of him selfe. But what doeth the spirit of God witnes of him: *Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, & naked.* And moreover doth affirme that this Angell did not know he was so.

Doth not Christ also teach vs in the Gospell, that there bee some Luke. 18. whose hartes deceyve them, making them trust in themselves that they are iust, and yet are not, and cleares it by the example of the *Pharisee*, giving thanks ynto God, *That he was not as other men, extortioner, vniust, &c.* who notwithstanding is accompted of God vniust. And to be short, in this point the Lord Iesus sheweth vs that many men at his second comming, shall be miserably deceived by the foolish testimonie of their own harts: some being confident because of the outward fellowship and famili-

8      Gods spirit in vs discerned

LUC. 13. 22

liaritie they have had with Christ, both in Word & Sacraments, and therefore pleading thus : *We have eaten and dronke in thy presence, and thou has taught in our streetes, shall neverthelesse receyve this answer: I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me.* Others also vpon the confidence of giftes bestowed vpon them by Christ for the good of his Church, pleading with him and saying : *Lord, Lord, have we not by thy Name prophecied, and by thy Name cast out Diuels, and by thy Name done many great works ?* shall receyve the same answer.

Mat. 7. 22.

Heereby it is evident, that the testimonie of a mans owne heart being alone may be deceitfull, evē when it is builded vpon profession and outward participation of the holy things of G O D. Yea even when it is builded vpon some rare speciall giftes of the holy ghost, which



*from our owne spirit.*

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which although they bee necessa-  
rie for the body or Church in ge-  
nerall, yet are not requisit in every  
member to salvation, such as is the  
gift of *Prophecyng, &c.* and there-  
fore may both be wanting with-  
out preiudice, and also had with-  
out enioying of salvation.

Thus have wee reason not to  
trust our Adoption and certaintie  
of our salvation, to the naked te-  
stimonie of our owne hearts, least  
we be found like the foolish Vir-  
gines. It is true, the testimonie of  
our owne hearts is needfull heere-  
vnto, because sayeth the Apostle,  
*If our heartes condemne vs, God is* 1 Ioh. 3. 20  
*greater then our heartes: and if our*  
*heartes condemne vs not, then have*  
*we boldnes towards God.* But it must  
not be alone, for so it shal never be  
sure, but having the spirit witnes-  
sing with it, then it is sure.

Now

Now yet before I speake of the discerning of the spirites testimonie, I must forewarne you of this one thing, to wit, that there bee many effectes of the spirit in the Saints oft times, which at the first the Saintes know not to bee from the spirit, and that both in their first calling, and after they be called, and therefore wee must not measure the working of the spirit in vs by our discerning, neyther must we iudge our selves destitute of the spirit, albeit wee doe not discerne the effectes wrought in vs, to bee from the spirit: for the Saints will feele strange effectes wrought in their mindes, which they will neither knowe whence they come, nor wherevnto they tend. This is verified by Iesus Christ him self, speaking of the verie working of the spirit in our spirituall

from our owne spirit.

IT

ritual birth, whereby we are made the children of God, comparinge it to the winde: *The winde* (saith he) *bloweth where it listeth, and thou* Io. 3. 8. *hearest the sound thereof, but can not tell whence it commeth, nor whether it goeth: so is every mā* (saith Christ) *that is borne of the spirit.*

This shall not seeme strange to vs if we marke what is saide of the Disciples at *Ephesus*, who were baptized as appeareth by *Apollas*, Acts. 19. 2 and yet they confesse to *Paul* that they had not so much as heard whether there were an H. ghost. It may bee also very apparantlie thought, that *Peter* when hee did witnesse of Christ, that he was the Christ *the Sonne of the living God*, Mat. 16. 16 did not knowe that testimonie to have bene from the spirit of God, and therefore Christ (to teach him that that testimonie was not the testimonie of his owne heart, but



but by the spirit of God) did tell him that flesh and bloud had not reueyled that to him, but his Father that is in heaven.

This I speake not to make men carelesse in trying whether they have the spirit or no, but to comfort weake Christians, who although they have the livelie effectes of the spirit, yet have not come so farre as to bee able to discern them to be from the spirit, as sometimes they will bee taught to vnderstande, and can not tell how at the first, and to repent, and can not tell how, and to reioyce, and can not tell how, and to love God and his Saints, and can not tell how, and to beleeve, and cannot tell how, which all notwithstanding are the proper workes of the spirit.

Neither speake I this to shunne the answering of your question touch-

touching the discerning of the spir-  
 ites testimonie, which I pray the  
 Lord to teach vs all, seeing there  
 can indeed no solide ioy possesse  
 our mindes, till we feele the spirit  
 of Adoption sealing vp the cer-  
 taintie of our electiō in our harts :  
 for if we bee sonnes (as saith the  
 Apostle) *the Lord hath sent forth the* Galat. 4. 6.  
*spirit of his sonne in our heartes, which*  
*crieth Abba, Father :* and therefore Rom. 8. 16  
*if any mā hath not the spirit of Christ,*  
*the same is not his.*

Seeing then it is even by the spi-  
 rit which he hath givē vs, that we  
 know our selves to bee the sonnes  
 of God, and that God as our Fa-  
 ther abydeth in vs, as saith *Iohn :* 1 Ioh. 3. 24  
 It is a most necessarie studie, and  
 most commendable in a Christi-  
 an, to trie if he hath the spirit.

Now therefore to come to your  
 question, I will speake of it in all  
 sobrietie accordinge to that mea-  
 sure

**54**      *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

sure of faith which the Lord hath given me.

First in generall, it shall not bee amisse to know what is the Testimonie of the spirit.

Secondly, after what maner the spirit doth give testimonie.

And lastly, we shall cleerlie see how to discerne it from the testimonie of our owne spirit.

In generall, the whole word of God is the testimonie of the spirit. For whatsoever is therein contayned, the spirit doeth witnes it, and nothing els doeth the spirit witnes, but that which is contayned in the word: therefore is the word of God called his Testimonie. *The*

*Psal. 19. testimonie of the Lord is sure. And againe: God established a Testimonie in Iacob. And oft times in the 119.*

*Psalme, the Lords wordes are called his Testimonies, because everie sentence of the word, is a testimonie*  
*nic*



nie of Gods will: Therefore is it  
that the Prophet commands vs to  
goe to the Lawe and to the Testi- Esa. 8.  
monie. For nothing can we know  
of Gods minde towards vs, except  
we hearken what the spirit speaks  
in his worde. and therefore, Christ  
willeth vs to search the Scriptures, Ioh. 5. 39.  
because they witnes of him. So,  
whatsoever the worde doeth per-  
swade our hearts touching GOD  
and his love in Christ, that is the  
Testimonie of the spirit: and ther-  
fore when hearing the worde of  
God, our hearts receyves anie as-  
surance or perswasion of redemp-  
tion, remission of sinnes, &c. that  
same is and must be the spirits te-  
stimonie. As for example, whē by  
the word a man is made to knowe  
Christ to be the Lord, the Redee-  
mer, &c. doubtlesse that is a testi-  
monie of Gods spirit, by the word  
witnessing to the heart that truth  
and

and causing the heart to beleve it. But heere wee must carefully take heede, that our hearts bee not deceyved touching that which you most desire to know, that is, touching our Adoption, by mistaking the spirits testimonie. For eschewing this danger we have to vnderstande that the spirit by the worde perswades two maner of wayes, to wit, generallie and speciallie, generallie when that which is reveyled out of the worde is generally beleaved as Gods truth: speciallie when it is speciallie beleaved. The generall is no warrant of adoptiō. For in that sort the very Divells beleve and tremble, saith *James*: a reprobate may beleve generally all to be true which is in the word of God, and yet never have anie testimonie of the spirit, of his particular adoption, hee may beleve that Christ is a Saviour of sinners, and

and yet not beleeve that hee is a Saviour vnto him: he may beleeve that God in Christ will forgive sinners: and yet no wayes have assurance of the remission of his owne finnes: yea hee may bee a Preacher, and be witnes of all the promises of God in Christ to others, & yet have no parte in them him selfe. Therefore leaving this generall testimonie of the spirit, I come to the speciall testimonie, which wee must discerne before our Adoption bee sealed to vs. And in discerning this, there is also great wisdom required: for therein also may a man be de- ceived. For there is some sort of speciall testificatiō that witnesseth not adoption. For vnderstanding hereof, we must consider that the spirits testimonie in speciall maner is of two sortes.

B The



18 Gods spirit in vs discerned

The first is, when hee witnesseth and reveiles grace particularlie to a man, but imprints not the thing reveiled in the heart, neither seales it in his soule.

The second is, when not onely he reveyles and witnesseth the promises in speciall manner to a man, but also writeth them in his heart, and seales them in his soule. Now to make this more plaine, we must consider what are the wordes of Gods covenant in Christ with the elect. After these dayes (saith the Lord) *I will put my Lawes in their minde, and in their heart I will write them.* If we waye these wordes aright, we shall see that which I have spoken, cleere. GOD in giving his Lawe spake to his people, and by his spirit witnessed his will to them: but this word which was spoken, was not written in their hearts, but in tables of stone: therefore

Ier. 31.  
Heb. 8.

from our owne spirit. 19

fore the Iewes did not abyde in that covenant. The peculiar promise of God to the elect in Christ is, that he shall write his wordes in Hebr. 8.9.

their hearts. When the the Lords spirit, witnesseth, & in witnessing writes the thing witnessed, in the heart, it is an assurance of Gods effectuall speaking: but when hee witnesseth to the heart, & yet writes not that testimonie in the heart, it is no testimonie of adoption. To

make this plaine: it is certaine, there can be no true faith in the heart, where the worde of GOD abydeth not. Christ shewes this in the fift chap. of *Iohn*, speakinge to the Iewes, *His worde* (sayeth hee)

Ioh. 5.38.

*have ye not abyding in you, because yee beleeve not in him whom he hath sent:* declaring that the abyding of the worde in man, and beleeving, doe still accompanie one the other. And if we will consider his speecch in

20 Gods spirit in vs discerned

Ioh. 6. 45. the sixt chap. of Iohn, wee shall see  
that the cause why his worde did  
not abyde in them, was, because  
they were not taught of God, that  
is, they had not hard nor learned  
of the Father, according to his pro  
mise, I will put my lawes in their  
minde; and in their heart will I  
write them: therefore it is that  
Moses speakinge of the estate of  
the chosen children of God vn  
der grace, saith, that this cōmande  
ment which I command thee this  
day (meaning thereby the worde  
of the Father) *is not hid from thee,*  
*neither is it farre from thee, it is not*  
*in the heaven, that thou shouldest say,*  
*who shall goe vp for vs to heaven, and*  
*bring it vs, and cause vs to heare it,*  
*that we may do it: neither is it beyond*  
*the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall*  
*goe over the sea for vs, and bring it vs*  
*and cause vs to heare it, that wee may*  
*doe it: but the word is very neare vn-*

Deut. 30.  
12.



from our owne spirit 22

to thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart for to doe it. The Apostle ex- Rom. 10.  
pounds the same to the Rom. and 68.  
shewes that this is the word of the Father which they did preach. For this is the promise of God to his Church vnder the Gospell, by the mouth of his Prophet: *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord*: and this is the Lords teaching, evē the writing of his word in the hart by his spirit. Of the first sort of this speciall receyving the word, you may read in Iohn: it is said of the Iewes, *many beleevd in Christ*, & yet these same doth Christ declare to be the servants of sinne, & childre of the diuel, & murtherers. and in the 37. verse he shewes why they were such, because his word had no place in thē: therefore doth he warn thē in the 31. ver. that if they did cōtinue in his word, they were verily his discipl. teaching thereby  
B 3 that

that it is not the receyving of his word simplic, that maketh vs disciples : but the abyding in it, which none can doe that hath it not written in their heart by the spirit. Of the second sorte of the speciall receyving the word, you may read in the 17. chap. of Iohn, in the wordes of Christ concerning his Disciples : *I have given them the wordes which thou gavest mee, & they have receyved them, &c.* Of both these sortes of receyving the spirites testimonie, you may read in the Gospell of Saint *Math.* in the Parable of the Sower, the one is like the ground which receyveth seed, but yeeldeth no fruit againe : the other is like the ground which receiveth the seed, and bringeth forth fruit in abundance : because God the Father is the Husbande man thereof : as Christ sayeth in the 15. chapter of *Iohn.*

Ioh 17.8.

Mat. 13.  
18.

Iohn. But you may aske, how I can call this sorte of witnesinge which is fruitlesse, to be the spirits testimonie? Remēber I pray you what the Apostle saith to the *Corinthians*, No man can call Iesus Lord but by the H.ghost. Where- <sup>1 Cor. 12.</sup>  
by it is plaine that there is no pos- <sup>3.</sup>  
sibilitie in man of receyving or acknowledging any part of that mysterie of godlynes, without the spirits working. And yet, albeit this be the worke of the spirit, yet doth it not prove him in whom it is, to be the childe of God. For Christ saith plainly, *Not every one that call me Lord, Lorde, shall enter into the kingdome of heaven.* <sup>Mat. 7. 21.</sup>

And because this same effect in the verie reprobate, is the work of <sup>1 Cor. 2.</sup>  
the spirit (for the naturall man can <sup>14.</sup>  
not perceyve the things of the spirit) therefore are the very reprobate thus illuminate after this ma-



14 Gods spirit in vs discerned

Heb. 6. 4.

ner said, to have bene made partakers of the H. ghost, not that ever that spirit of Adoptiō, which God sendes foorth in the heartes of his sonnes to seale them vnto the day of redemption, was ever sent into their hearts. But because even that light & tast of heavēly things whiche they received, was by the working of the H. ghost : although he never did give thē ful possession of them by imprinting them in their harts, & sealing thē in their soules. For that which Christ saith to his discip. (whē he promiset to send thē the spirit of truth) remayneth still true, that the world can not re-

Ioh. 14. 17

ceive him, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him : & therefore wee may iustly say, that they who receive this tast of Christ & of the good word of god, do not discern the spirit to worke these thinges, because they neither see him nor know him, neither cā they receive him,

*from our owne spirit.* 25

him, but are like vnto natural men,  
who albeit they have their being, **Act. 17. 28**  
& life, & moving in God, yet still  
remain without God in this world. **Eph. 2.**

But it may the be demanded how **12.**  
it is that they are said to bee made  
partakers of the H. ghost: and what  
difference is there betwixt them &  
the elect in the participatiō of the  
spirit? To vnderstand this, we must  
remember that ther must be a cer-  
tain participatiō of the spirit wher-  
soever any effect of the spirit is  
foud in whatsoever measure or ma-  
ner. But we are to mark a differēce  
both of measure & maner. For as a  
mā that hath an excellent piece of  
wine to sel, wil give to al that com,  
so much as is sufficiēt to make the  
knowe the tast of it, yet he giveth  
not to every one such a quātitie as  
is sufficiēt to bring nourishment &  
refreshment to their bodyes & spi-  
rits. And as a phisicion that hath  
prepared a comfortable potiō for  
the

the health of a beloved patient, he will give to others a little of it to make them apprehende the taste of it: but not so, as to have anie strength to make anie operation in their stomacke: for that quantitie hee gives onely to the patient for whose health it is prepared.

Nowe they who tasted of this wine or potion, can discerne the goodnesse of it, albeit they never did drinke it, nor ever be partakers of the refreshing power of it.

So is it with the Lorde in his dispensation: he vseth sometimes onely to give a naked sight and knowledge of Christ, and his mercie in him, to men: and this I called before a generall perswasion of the spirit, when men are made to know Christ in generall, but without all sense or feelinge of him.

Somtimes the spirit comes nearer, and touches the heart with Christ  
and



and with the powers of the world  
to come, even so farre, as the heart  
receiveth a tast of the love of God,  
& of the mercies of God in Christ,  
in such sorte, that they receive the  
word incontinentlie with ioy: as  
saith Christ. The spirit havinge in  
that measure testified the worde  
to them, as is sufficient to make  
them to taste the sweetnes of it:  
albeeit hee never fill their heart  
with it, nor imprint it in their  
minde, that they may finde the  
power of it vnto life. The last de-  
gree of the spirites witnesinge, is,  
when not onely he touches the  
lippes with grace to make the tast  
of it felt: but when hee poures in  
the love of God, and all the graces  
reveyled in the worde, and sheds  
them abroad in the heart: as saith  
the Apostle to the Romans, and  
so makes the heart to enioy, re-  
ceyve and possesse the promise by  
im,

Math. 13.  
20.

Rom. 5. 5.

printing it therein : So that the working and witnessing of the spirit, in the wicked, is like the smell of an Apothecaris shop : which one that passeth by, receyveth, although hee never carrie anie of these odoriferous things with him. But the witnessing of the spirit, to the elect, is by imparting the thing witnessed to the soule, & making it reallic to possesse it. So that if a man could see the soule of a true child of God, he should see ingraven in it, mercie, peace, love, righteousness, life, ioy, and Christ himselfe. all the promises of God in Christ, being written therein, by the spirit, according to the covenant of God. Conforme to this, doth the Apostle speake of the spirits witnessing to the hearts of the Corinthians, when hee saith, yee are manifest to bee the Epistle of Christ,

*Christ, ministred by vs, and written, not with inck, but with the spirit of the livinge GOD: not in Tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.*

Nowe therefore wee come to speake of this witnesinge of the spirit which is proper to the elect: And to the ende wee may cleerlie discern, the testimonie of the spirit, which witneseth with our spirits, that we are the sonnes of GOD: wee must yet more deepe lie marke and consider this testimonie.

The worke of the spirit in assuring vs of Adoption, is twoofolde.

The firste, for distinction, wee shall call this first writinge of the worde reveyled, in our hearts, and so makinge vs to beleeve in God, as our God and Father in *Eph. i. 13* Christ.

The



Eph. i. 13

The second, is our sealling, after we have beleaved. That it is so, ye may see in the wordes of the Apostle to the Ephesians. *In whom also (sayes he) ye have trusted after that ye heard the word of trueth, even the Gospell of your salvation, wherein also after yee beleaved, yee were sealed with the holy spirit of promise.*

1 Cor. 2.

Marke first this worke of the spirit, in causing vs to beleeve in God, by the effectuall revelation of the worde: next, marke that other worke of the spirit, after we have beleaved, in sealing vs. The first of these two, although it bee felt by vs, yet at the first, wee can not discern it to be the worke of the spirit, till afterward. For, before we be made spirituall, we can discern nothing of the spirit: because the things of the spirit are spirituallly discerned. But when we receyve the spirit which is of God,

God, then are we able to knowe the things which are given to vs of God. Therefore that testimonie whereof the Apostle speaketh to the Rom. which witnesseth with our spirits: is to be vnderstood of the seconde worke of the spirit, which is our sealing.

That we may vnderstande this aright, we must consider that there is something that cometh in in vs betwixt the first worke of the spirit and the second. And that is the testimonie of our owne spirit, bearing witnes, that we are the sonnes of God. For when God by his spirit, hath imprinted in our heartes, the word of promise, then begins our hearts to say, we are the children of God: being perswaded by the spirit, secretlie insinuating the worde in our hearts to beleeve, & Psal. 116. beleeving to speak: according as it 10. is said, *I beleeved & therefore did speak.* 1 Cor. 4.

Now 13.

Luc. 22.  
31.

Psal. 68.  
28.

Now it might seeme there needed no more. but let vs remember what Christ saith to *Peter, Simon, Simon, behold Sathan hath desired to sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith faile not*. So wee have need that our heartes be established in that worke of the spirit, otherwayes we should bee in danger to make shipwracke of faith & of a good conscience: which is nothing els but this testimonie of our owne hearts. Therefore doth the Church pray in the Psalme: *Establish O God that which thou hast wrought in vs*. And the Apostle, after hee hath given thanks vnto God for the Thessalonians effectuell calling, he prayes to G O D, *That hee who had given them this good hope through grace, would also establish them in everie word and good worke*. Therefore is it that our God, for stablishing vs in faith, & in



in the assurance of our Adoption,  
 seales vs by the holy spirit of pro-  
 mise. This is manifest out of the  
 former place to the Ephes. where  
 he saith, *That after they beleaved,*  
*they were sealed with the holy spirit of*  
*promise.* This same doth the Apo-  
 stle to the Gallat. confirme, when  
 hee sheweth that Christ was sent  
 to this ende, to redeeme vs : *That Gal. 4. 6.*  
*we might receyve the Adoption of the*  
*sonnes:* and then he addeth, *and be-*  
*cause yee are sonnes, G O D hath sent*  
*foorth the spirit of his sonne into your*  
*hearts, that crieth Abba, Father.* And  
 that this sealing of vs, by sendinge  
 forth the spirit of Adoptiō in our  
 hearts, is the meane whereby God  
 establissheth vs, it is manifest by  
 the Apostle to the Corinthians. *2 Cor. 13*  
 For when first hee hath shewed, *21.*  
 that it is God which establissheth,  
 saying, *It is God which establissheth*  
*us with you in Christ :* then addeth

C

he

1 Ioh. 3.  
27.

1 Cor. 5. 5

Rom. 8. 15  
16.

he the meane whereby God did  
stablish them, saying: *and hath an-  
ointed vs, who hath also sealed vs, and  
hath given the earnest of the spirit in  
our hearts.* Which three sayings are  
all one thing in substance. There-  
fore doeth Iohn, from this anoin-  
ting, confirme and assure these to  
whom he did write, against the  
fearing to fall away: but (saith he)  
*The anointing which yee receyved of  
him, dwelleth in you: and as it taught  
you, yee shall abide in him.* And the  
Apostle to the Corinthians taketh  
the Argument of his confidence  
from this, *that God hath given vs the  
earnest of the spirit.* And the same  
Apostle from this giving of vs the  
spirit of libertie which crieth Ab-  
ba Father, proveth vs to bee the  
sonnes of God in that eight chap.  
to the Romanes. Whereby it is  
plaine, that by these three, the self-  
same thing is meant: albeit divers-  
lie

lie expressed : accordinge to the three sortes of confirmation, the one by anointing, so were Kings, Priestes and Prophetes confirmed in their calling : the other by an earnest, which is a cōfirmation of the bargaine, and of the payement of the full somme : and the last, by sealing, which in all writes, con-  
 tracter, and obligations, is a confirmation of all therein contey-  
 ned and promised. Accordinge to which, amongst the *Persians*, what soever was sealed with the Kings Ring, could not bee changed nor revoked. Therefore, whomsoever God seales vnto life, as his child : he is made most sure of eternall life. For this cause is it, that in the Revelatiō, God first will have his childrē sealed before the enemies can have power to execute their malice, and of these thus sealed, it is, that Christ saith, *that the gates*

Dan. 6. 9.

Revel. 7. 3.

Ma. 16. 18



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of hell shall not prevaile against them.  
And that they shall never perish, nei-  
ther shall any plucke them out of his  
hande.

Ioh. 10. 28

Now, this same sending foorth  
of the spirit of Adoption in our  
hearts, is our sealinge. Therefore  
saith the Apost. to the Ephesians,  
ye were sealed with the holy spirit of  
promise. And this same is also our  
anointing, poured out vpon vs, as

Ioel 2. 28.

Act. 2. 17.

1 Ioh. 2. 2.

that oyle on Aaron: therefore are  
we saide to have this annointing  
from him which is holy, and that  
it teacheth vs, and that it is true, &  
not lying: according to that whi-  
che is said by Christ of the spirit:

Io. 14.

I will pray the Father, & he will give  
you another comforter, that hee may a-  
byde with you for ever, even the spirit  
of trueth, he shall teach you all things;

2 Cor. 5. 5

And the same also is our earnest:  
therefore it is called the earnest of  
the spirit: and also the first fruites  
of

of the spirit. So by the same spirit,  
as by oyle, as by earnest, as by a  
seale, doth God stablish our harts,  
in that which they doe witnes to  
vs, touching our Adoption. And  
that doth the Apostle signifie whē  
he saith, *the same spirit beareth wit-* Rom. 8.  
*nes with our spirits, that wee are the* 16.  
*sonnes of God.*

Marke then the order of Gods  
working. First he speakes the word  
of trueth to the heart, and in spea-  
king, writes it in the heart: heere-  
vpon the heart is made to beleewe  
that which it hath heard & recey-  
ved, from the spirit: and when it  
beleewe, it speakes, and the thing  
it speakes, is that same, which is  
engravē in it, by the spirit: to wit,  
that God is his God, and hee his  
child. For never can the hart of a  
man speak one word of mercie to  
him, nor of Adoption, till the spi-  
rit of God have spoken first mer-

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cie to it. Nowe when the spirit of man hath spoken, and given testimonie to him, of his election, then the Lord for establishing the heart in this, and confirming man in the testimonie of his heart, he addeth his spirit: and by the testimonie thereof, seales this promise in the heart, and makes Adoption and eternall life, most certaine and sure to the soule, that he dare be bold with the Apostle to say, *Who shall lay any thing to my charge? who shall condempne me? who shall seperate mee from the love of Christ: I am perswaded that neither death nor life, nor anguish, &c. shall bee able to seperate me from the love of God which is in Iesus Christ my Lord.*

And that we may yet more evidently see the necessitie of this testimonie of Gods spirit: we are to consider that albeit our own harts have in them a power to witnes  
vnto



vnto vs what wee are both by nature and by grace, yet the testimonie of our heartes touching our estate by grace, is not so fullie and confidentlie to bee reposed vpon and trusted, as the testimonie thereof touching our estate by nature. For wee may assuredly trust our hearts and cōsciences, when vpon anie guiltines they condemne vs, seeing hee is cursed who abydes not in everie jot of the Law to fulfill it: & he that trāsgresseth one cōmandment, is guiltie of all: but we are not always to give absolut credit to our consciences, when vpon conceit of innocēcie they iustifie vs. For although our consciences accuse vs of nothing, yet thereby we are not iustified, as is plaine by the saying of the Apost. touching himself 1. Cor. 4. 4. the reason hereof is, because our consciences doe not so cleerlie see our estate which

Dent. 17.

21.

Gal. 3. 10.

Iam. 2. 10.

is from God, neither can they of them selves so truly iudge of it, as they may do of their estate by nature, when they are illuminate by God: for then they are made to know and cleerly to see that in vs there is no goodnes, and therefore ther is iust reason why they should condempne vs. And we are verily to beleeeve our harts vpon this sight and knowledge condempning vs. but on the other part, although we see the minde of God towards vs in Christ, yet wee can not so thoroughly apprehende his promises vpon any sight we receive, that we dar trust our felicitie absolutely to the testimonie of our owne hearts. First, because our heartes may be deceyved, as is evident by scripture, that many shall bee. Secondly, because wee may mistake the working of God in vs, and lay hold on a wrong ground. Third-  
lie,

lie, because our heartes are more prone to speake good nor evill of our selves, even when they have neuer so small occasion to doe so, and when they have much more occasion to do the contrarie. And lastlie, because all men are lyars, & onely God is true, and therefore we must never give so much credit to our consciences, speaking good of vs, as when they speake evill : speciallie when the question is of being the sonnes of God, or not : so that even when they witnes that we are the sonnes of God, wee are not to rest herevpon except God, who only knoweth whom he hath chosen, doe by his spirit confirme the testimonie of our spirit. For we may much more surely trust our heartes in that which is in our selves and from our selves, then in that which is neither from our selves nor in our selves, but is the free gift



gift of God in Christ. Therefore that we should not bee deceyved by our deceitful harts, God secou. deth our owne testimonie touching his taking of vs for his children, by his spirit, witnessing the same: even as by his owne mouth cōfirming our adoptiō. For by the mouth of two or three witnesses shal everie word be stablished.

Thus I have shewen you what is the spirits testimonie, & in what manner he gives it, and how necessarie it is. Now I come to that which you desired to know : that is, how wee discern the testimonie of the spirit which seales our Adoption from the testimonie of our owne spirit. For knowledge of this, First, let vs consider, that there be three things, whereby wee discern our Election and Adoption from the spirit of God. The first is his presence with vs. The second

cond is his worke in vs. The third is his voyce vnto vs.

Touching the first: the verie presence of the spirit of Adoptiō, is a witnesse of our Adoption. For the spirit is the earnest of the inheritance of God, as wee have shewen before: therefore whosoever hath the spirit, the verie having of him, is a sure testimonie to that man, that he is the sonne of God: *For he that hath the spirit of Christ, he is Christes:* as by the con- Rom. 8.9; trarie, *hee that hath not the spirit of Christ, is not Christes.* Now the having of the spirit is discerned by the other two, that is, by the work, and by the voyce: therefore those two are chiefly to be considered: first his worke in vs, which must go before his voyce: I meane this voyce which seales Adoptiō: For otherwayes his voyce alwayes goeth before his worke: for it is by the

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the worde, that hee worketh, all things in vs.

For vnderstanding of this work and voyce of the spirit which sealeth adoption, marke the wordes of the Apostle in that same eight chap. of the Rom, touchinge the spirit, *Yee have not receyved* (sayeth he) *the spirit of bondage to feare againe, but yee have receyved the spirit of Adoption, whereby wee crye, Abba Father.* Heere Adoption (vnder which is vnderstood libertie) is opposed to bondage, as the effect of the spirit. Next, the voyce following heerevpon, is manifest in the wordes following: (*whereby wee crye, Abba, Father*). Which crye, more plainly is saide by the Apostle to the Galathians, to bee the crie of the spirit, saying: *and because yee are sonnes, God hath sent forth the spirit of his sonne in your harts which cryeth Abba, Father.* And therefore is

Rom. 8.15

Gal. 4.6.



is it that the Apostle to the Romans  
 saith, *that the same spirit beareth  
 witnesse with our spirit, that we are the  
 children of God.* What then is this  
 worke of the spirit in vs, that wit-  
 nesseth Adoption? This speciall  
 worke, is, libertie, or freedome: ac-  
 companied ever with peace, bold-  
 nes, confidence, and reioycing.  
 This is plaine by these places of  
 scripture. First, the Apostle to the  
 Corinthians, speaking of this first  
 great effect of the spirit, saith: *Now 2. Cor. 3.  
 the Lord is the spirit, and where the  
 spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie:*  
 and of the peace that accompanies  
 this libertie, the Apostle speakes  
 plainlie to the Ephesians, where, *Eph. 2. 13.  
 after he hath shewē, that by Christ  
 we are delivered from the Law of  
 commandements & hatred, that  
 thereby did lye vpon vs, and hath  
 spoken of the peace followinge  
 therevpon, hee proves this peace  
 by*

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by these wordes: for through him  
**Eph. 2. 18** wee both haue an entrance vnto the  
Father by one spirit. Therefore the  
same Apostle to the Romans,  
**Rom. 5. 1.** sayeth, That being iustified by faith,  
wee haue peace towards God. Of this  
boldnes and confidence, the A-  
postle speakes to the Ephesians,  
**Eph. 3. 12** saying: By whom wee haue boldnes  
and accessse with confidence by faith  
in him. Therefore is it that the  
Apostle to the Romans, sayeth:  
That wee haue not receyved the spirit  
of bondage vnto feare, but the spirit  
that is without feare, that is, of bold-  
nes and confidence. Touching re-  
ioycing, the Apostle Peter spea-  
**keth, 1. Pet. 1. 8.** saying: In whom beleeuing, yee  
reioyce with ioye unspeakeable and  
glorious. The same also affirmeth  
the Apostle to the Rom. saying &  
**Rom. 5. 2.** we reioyce vnder the hope of the glorie  
of God, neither so onely, but wee reioyce  
also in tribulations, and he addes the  
reason,

from our owne spirit.

reason, because the love of God is shed abroad in our heartes by the holy ghost which is given vnto vs. This I call the speciall working of the spirit, for sealing our Adoption: because these effectes cannot possiblie bee in vs, except the spirit of adoption worke them. and therefore whosoever hath them, hee hath an vndoubted testimonie of his adoption, from the verie spirit of adoption. For this libertie, and effectes of it, are not the worke of a mans owne hart: but the work of Gods spirit, in the heart: making it free, & causing it to reioyce, & making it cōfident towards God, that this may be cleere, we have to consider the estate of man, first, in ignorāce and blindnes, before he knewe either God, or him selfe. Secondly, his estate vnder the Lawe. And lastlie, his estate vnder grace thorough the Gospell.

In



In the two former cases, there is nothing in mans heart, but blindness, or the spirit of bondage, vnto feare: yea even in the verie elect, before they receyve this spirit of Adoption and grace, by the Gospel.

In man by nature, as he is borne, there is nothinge but blindness, I say nothing, not that I exclude bondage: for in both the first two estates of man, blindness and bondage doe accompanie each other: but in the first estate, blindness so reigneth, that bondage is not perceyved nor felt. In the second, although blindness be so farre taken away, as man see and feelee his bondage: yet it is not so taken away, that it hide not from him his libertie and freedome. Therefore in the first he is the slave of blindness and darknesse: because the power thereof is predominant in him: holding

holding him in ignorāce of God,  
 of him selfe, of sinne, and of true  
 righteousness. Therefore doth the  
 scripture say, *There is none that vn-* Rom. 3. 11  
*derstandeth, there is none that seeketh*  
*God.* And the Apost. to the Ephe-  
 sians, shewing the naturall estate  
 of man, declareth that he is with- Eph. 2. 12  
*out Christ, an aliant from the com-*  
*mon wealth of Israel, a stranger from*  
*the covenant of promise, without hope,*  
*and without God in the worlde.* And  
 therefore speakinge of the vaine  
 conversation of men naturall, hee  
 sheweth the causes of it to be this,  
*because they have their understanding* Ep. 4. 5  
*darkened, beeing strangers from the*  
*life of God, through the ignorāce that*  
*is in them.* And most cleerlie in the  
 fift chapter, *for ye were once darknes,* Cha. 5. 8  
 meaning by nature: and therefore  
 they who are effectuellie called to  
 grace, are in that same place saide,  
*to be light in the Lord.* And by the

D

Apo.

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1. Pet. 2. 9.

1. Thes. 5.  
5.

Colos. 1.  
13.

Gal. 4. 8.

Apostle Peter, are said, *to be called of God out of darknes to his marveyulous light.* And to the Thessalonians, they that are called, are saide, *to be of the day and of the light.* And they which are not called, are saide, *to be of the night, and of darknes.* And the Apostle to the Colossians (willing to shewe the force of darknes in holding men in bondage) expresses their calling by G O D, in these wordes : *who hath drawn vs out vnder the power of darknes.* So it is manifest, that in our estat e naturall, wherein (as saith the Apostle to the Galathians) *wee knowe not God,* darknes hath power and dominion over vs in such sorte, that we have no libertie of minde, nor body, to serve God : the minde being kept in ignorance of God, of righteousness and of sinne. And so consequentlie, man in this estate, is without feare. Not because



*from our owne spirit.*

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cause he is not in danger, but because hee seeth not his danger. Therefore also may he bee secure, because he is senselesse: but confident hee can not be, because hee hath no knowledge. It is true, men in this case are commonly most peart in sinne, and bolde in wickednesse, against GOD: because they know neither him, nor them selves. And therefore, oft tymes, as foolish flyes, they rush vpon the candle: or blinde horses doe runne against the wall: but bolde and confident in him, they can not be, who knowes him not in Christ. Therefore doth the Apostle declare that the cause why such men give themselves to wantonnesse, is, because they have no feeling.

Eph. 4. 19.

Now in the second estate, vnder the Lawe, we are further from libertie, and the remaynant bles-

D 2

sings

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sings of the spirit of Adoptiō. For  
albeit that some light arise in the  
heart, by the Lawe : as the know-  
ledge of sinne (conforme to that  
Rom.7.7 of the Apostle, *I knew not sinne but  
by the Law*) yet this light, doeth  
only reveyle to man his bondage :  
but doth not remove nor remedie  
it : because that was impossible to  
the Lawe, *in as much as it was weak  
because of the flesh*, as saith the same  
Rom.8.3. Apostle. Therefore this light of  
the Lawe, although it bee necessa-  
rie, yet it is comfortlesse. For it  
Rō.7.14. shewes first to man, that he is *solde*  
Gal.3.10. *vnder sinne*, and that *no good dwel-*  
Rō.7.10. *leth in him*. Heerevpon, it reveiles  
vnto him, that hee is vnder the  
curse of God, and so that hee is  
dead. Wherevpon it comes to  
passe, that God therein is so terri-  
ble to man, that hee cannot abyde  
him, nor heare him, but is com-  
pelled to runne from him : as is  
cleere

cleere by the 12. chapt. of the Hebrues, verse 19. 20. 21. compared with Exod. chapt. 20. verse 18. 19. 20. 21. Thus our former blindnes, is turned into bondage, and the fruit of blindnes, that is securitie: is turned in the fruit of bondage, which is feare. Therefore the ministerie of the Lawe, is called, the ministerie of death and condemp- 2 Cor. 3. nation. And in the first act of Gods calling, the spirit that speaketh in the Lawe, and is given by the ministerie of the Lawe, is called the spirit of bondage, vnto feare. Because the sight and knowledge of our selves, and of God, which the spirit gives vs by the Lawe, workes these effectes. And therefore by that name is distinguished, from the spirit of Adoption, which is given by the Gospell. and this will the Apostle signifie to the Galatians, when he (compareinge the

Rom. 8. 15



Gal. 4. 24. two Testaments to the two, by whom Abraham begot Ismael & Isaack) doeth shewe, that the one, which is from Mount Sinai, doeth beget vnto bondage.

This being the estate of man, both by nature and by the Lawe: it is manifest, that these effectes of the spirit, which witnesse adoption, are not in man, neither by nature, neither by the Lawe. But when the free spirit of the Lorde commeth, then commeth libertie to the heart. And this spirit of the Lord (otherwayes called the spirit of promise) comes to vs by the preaching of faith, and not of the workes of the Lawe: as witnesse the Apostle to the Galathians, and the historie of the Actes of the Apostles.

Gal. 3. 2.  
and 14.  
Act. 10.  
44.

Nowe then, when the man, (who first by nature, was vnder blindnes: and next, by the Lawe, was

was vnder sinne and death, kept in bondage and feare) findes him selfe, first delivered frō that blindness and ignorance of minde : and next, from that bondage of sinne and death : and so consequentlie frō his feare, which was wrought in him by his bondage, then may he knowe, that the spirit of adoption, grace, and libertie, hath spoken to his heart, and hath taken possession of it: because he findes, that promise accōplished in him, wherof Zacharias speaketh, in the Gospell, according to Luke : to wit; *that God would grant to vs, that we being delivered out of the bandes of our enemies, should serue him without feare, all the dayes of our life, in holynes and righteausnes before him.* For this was the ende of Christes death, sayeth the Apostle to the Hebrewes, to witt, *that hee might deliver all them, who for feare of* Luk. i. 74  
Heb. 2. 15  
D 4 death,

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Heb. 2. 15 death, were all their life tyme subiect  
to bondage. Thus therefore, the mā,  
who can discerne in his hearte,  
which once was filled with the  
spirit of bondage vnto feare, the  
ioyfull libertie of the sonnes of  
God : whereby hee that was the  
bondman and seruant of sinne, by  
the Lawe, is now by the Gospell,  
made the free man of Christ, (the  
bandes of iniquitie being broken)  
and so freed, both from the guil-  
tines, and also from the power of  
sinne : ( being iustified by faith in  
Iesus Christ, and having grace, in  
the superabondance thereof, reig-  
ning through righteousness vnto  
eternall life through Iesus Christ  
our Lord: even in the soule, wher-  
in sinne in the aboūdance thereof,  
had reigned through vnrighteous-  
nes vnto death): this mā I say, may  
easilie discerne, the spirit, witnes-  
sing his adoption, by this his liber-  
tie

Rom. 5. 1.  
and 21.



from our owne spirit.

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tie from the flauerie of sinne First in his iustification, next in his sanctification : and so consequentlie from the feare of death following thereon. In place whereof, succeeds, a ioye vnspeakeable & glorious : the hart iustified, reioycing in the hope of the glorie of God.

For this cause is it, that the Apostle Peter, willeth vs by *ioyning vertue to our faith, and to vertue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance,* *&c.* to make our calling and election sure. Because our sanctification (being the worke of the spirit of adoption) is a sure seale of our election. And therefore doeth the Apostle Peter give this reason of his threatening and rebuke against *Simon Magus*, to wit, that albeit he was baptised, yet the Apostle did see, that he was in the gale of bitterness, and in the band of iniquitie : wherein, *Simon* being still  
cap.

Pet. 1. 8.

Rom. 5. 2.

2Pet. 1. 10.

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captive, could have no assurance of adoption: albeit, hee had outwardly embraced the Gospell: and therefore is said, to have beleeved. And because this worke, is the great worke of Christ, in the elect, and chief ende of his coming: Therefore doeth the Prophet Esaie describe the worke of his comming, and effect of the spirit of the Lord in him, in these

**Esa. 61. 1.** *The spirit of the Lorde is upon mee; the Lord hath annointed me, that I should preach the Gospell to the poore: that I should heale the broken hearted: that I should preach deliverie to the captives, and receyvinge of sight to the blinde: that I should set at libertie them that are brused, and that I should preach the acceptable yeare of the Lord: to appoint unto them that murne in Zion, and to give unto them beautie for ashes, the oyle of ioye for mourning, the garmentes of gladnes*

*from our owne spirit.*

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*gladnes for the spirit of beavines, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. Which Prophecie, Christ sheweth to bee fulfilled by him selfe in the Gospell accordinge to Luc. in the which it is manifest, that the work of the spirit, in preaching the Gospell, is, to worke knowledge and libertie, in making vs trees of righteousness, planted by God: and by libertie, to worke ioye and gladnes, in place of mourning & beavines.*

Luk. 4. 18.

*Therefore is it by good reason, that the Apostle forbiddes vs, to let sinne reigne in our mortall bodies, that we should obey it in the lustes thereof: in respect wee are made free from sinne, in Christ: and are made the servants of God: having our fruit in holines. And also biddeth vs reioyce alwayes in the Lord: for there is no condemnation to vs,*

Rom. 6. 12

Phil. 4. 4.

*that,*



**Rom. 8.1.** *that are in Christ, seeing we are freed  
2. from the lawe of sinne and death, by  
the lawe of the spirit of life which is in  
Christ Iesus.* This is then that great  
effect of the spirit of Adoption, in  
our heartes, whereby, as by a most  
sure testimonie, wee discernē, the  
spirit sealing our Adoption. Be-  
cause this spirit of adoptiō, which  
is given vs by the preaching of the  
Gospell, takes away, both these  
miseries : to witt, the blindnes,  
wherein we are by nature, & next  
the bondage, reveiled by the law,  
and feare caused thereby.

Havinge thus spoken, of the  
worke of the spirit, it followeth  
that we consider the voyce of the  
spirit.

This voyce of the spirit, is of  
two sortes. The first is, when the  
spirit within vs, speaketh to God  
for vs. The second is, whē the spi-  
rit in vs, speaketh from God vnto  
vs,

vs. The voice of the spirit to God, is, when we by the spirit, call vpon God as our Father. And this voice of the spirit, is not only an euidece that we have the spirit, but also a witnes of our Adoption : making manifest vnto vs, that the spirit hath wrought in vs, that worke of libertie, whereof we have alreadie spoken.

Touching the first, it is manifest, in that, without the spirit, we can not pray vnto God : as testifieth the Apostle to the Romans, *Rom. 8.26* saying : *The spirit also helpeth our infirmities : for wee knowe not what to pray as we ought : but the spirit it self, maketh request for vs with sighes that cannot be expressed.* Conforme to this also doth the same Apostle say in that same place, *Wee also who* *Rom. 8.27* *have the first frutes of the spirit, even wee doe sigh in our selves, waitinge for the Adoption.*

And

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Zacha. 12.  
10.

And this is cleerly confirmed by the words of the Prophet Zacharie: *In that day, sayeth the Lord, I will poure vpon the house of David, and vpon the inhabitantes of Ierusalem, the spirit of grace and of compassion, and they shall looke vpon me who they have pearched, and they shall lament for him, &c.* The veritie of this point may be shewed by the nature of prayer: in which first it is required, that it be made vnto God. Secondly, that it bee made in the Name of Christ. Thirdly, that it be made accordinge to the will of God.

Concerning the first, it cannot be without the spirit: because we have no entrance nor accessse to God in Christ, but by the spirit. This is manifest by the Apostle, Eph. 2, 18. saying: *For through him, wee both have accessse to the Father, by one spirit.* Secondly, we can not pray in the  
the



from our owne spirit.

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the Name of Christ, except wee  
acknowledge God his Father, and  
in him our Father : which we can  
never doe, except we be taught by  
the spirit. For (as saith the Apo-  
stle) *The spirit beareth witnesse with* Rom. 8. 16  
*our spirit, that we are the sonnes of*  
God. Thirdly, no prayer can bee  
made accordinge to the will of  
God, but by the spirit : because,  
*None knoweth the mynde of God, but* 1 Cor. 2. 18  
*the spirit of G O D.* According to Rom. 8.  
which the same Apostle sayeth : 27.  
*That he that searceth the heartes, kno-  
weth what is the meaning of the spirit.*  
*For hee maketh intercession for the*  
*Saincts, according to the will of God.*  
By all these it is plaine, that none  
can pray which have not the spi-  
rit. For the babling of hypocrits,  
is no prayer : seeing it proceedes  
not from the spirit. And this is to  
be vnderstoode of all manner of  
prayer. For all manner of prayer,  
be

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be it confession, petition, supplication, or giving of thanks, must still be by the spirit. According to the saying of the Apostle. *And pray alway in all manner of prayer and supplication in the spirit.*

**Ephe. 6.**

**28.**

Moreover, this voyce of the spirit is the witnesse of our adoption : and of the worke of our freedom in Christ. Which is evident by the Apostle, First, in that hee sayeth, *That by this spirit we crye Abba Father.* And the same Apostle, to witnesse the same trueth, sayeth in another place : *Because yee are sonnes, God hath sent forth the spirit of his sonne into your heartes, crying Abba Father.* Which crie of the spirit can not bee in vs, vntill first we be the sonnes of God : seeing this crie contayneth in it, a plaine profession of our Adoption, while the spirit in vs, doth call vpon God, as our Father : and maketh vs call vpon

**Gal. 4. 6.**

*from our owne spirit.*

upon him, as our Father.

Secondly, this is manifest by the description, which the Apostle setteth downe, of the spirit, whereby we crye Abba Father: *That it is not the spirit of bondage vnto feare,* Rom. 8. 15

*but the spirit of adoption.* Which by the contrarie, may be vnderstood, to comprehend freedome and libertie. According to the saying of of the Apostle, *Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is libertie.* For they 2. Cor. 3. 17.

who live in darknesse, and in the bandes of iniquitie, not yet made partakers of the ioyfull libertie of the sonnes of God, can never with boldnes approach to the throne of grace, to call vpon GOD as their Father. Heerevpon it is that the

Scriptures absolutely conclude, *That whosoever shall call vpon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved.* Ioel. 2. 32. Rom. 10. 13.

Because no man can call vpon God, vntill hee beleeeve, that God is his

E God,



Rom. 10.

God, and he his sonne in Christ; according to the saying of the Apostle, *How shall they call vpon him, in whom they have not beleaved?*

This sheweth plainlie, that the spirit cries, or our callinge vpon God by the spirit, as our Father, is a sure testimonie of our Adoption, and seale of our effectuell calling. Therefore, vnder the calling vpon the Name of the Lord, is oft set downe, the true and infallible description of Gods children: as namelie, to the Corinthians, *Vnto the Church of GOD*

1. Cor. 1. 2

*which is at Corinth, with all that call vpon the Name of the Lord IESVS Christ in every place.* And the same Apostle sheweth, that the foundation of God which remaineth sure (that is, the election of God) hath this seale, *Let every one that*

2. Tim. 2. 19.

*calleech vpon the Name of the Lord, depart from iniquitie.* Declaring plainlie,

lie, that to call vpon the Name of the Lord, is as much as to be one of Gods elect children: which in that same place is made manifest, by this other sentence, *Follow* 2. Tim. 3. 22. *after righteousnes faith, love and peace with them that call vpon the Name of the Lord with pure hearts.*

Thus wee are to take our calling or cryinge on the Name of the Lorde, with boldnes, in that confidence, and assruance which faith bringeth, for a sure testimonie of the spirit of Adoption, possessing our heartes, and so of our Adoption.

The other voyce of the spirit, to wit, when the spirit speaketh from God to vs, is likewise a most solide, firme, and infallible testimonie of our Adoption. And this sorte of voyce, is that whereof the Prophet speaketh, *And thine eare* Esay. 30. 21. *shall heare the voyce of one behinde*

thee, saying: *This is the way, &c.* Of the same doeth the Lord speake in another place, saying: *I will allure hir and bring hir in the wildernes, and speake kindly vnto hir.* Which places, are not onely to bee referred, to the Lords speaking to his Church, in the externall ministrie of his word: but are speciallie to be vnderstoode, of the inwarde working of God in the heart, by his spirit. Of which sorte of voyce David speaketh, when hee sayeth to the Lord, *Let mee heare ioye and gladnesse, that the bones which thou hast broken, may reioyce.* And this sorte of voyce is three folde, for it consisteth eyther in Gods teaching, or in his confirming of that which he teacheth: or then in his conforing of his children in their afflictions. Of the first, that is his teaching voyce, wee have spoken before.



For God by his spirit, speakes to vs, when inwardlie he openeth our heartes, and maketh vs heare his word of grace, and to vnderstande it, & to receyve it. Of this worke Christ speaketh, when hee sayeth : *But the Comforter which is the holy spirit, whom the Father will sende in my Name, hee shall teach you all things.* Secondly, God is said to speake vnto vs, by his spirit, when hee confirmeth to vs, the thinge which he hath spoken: and of this wee have also spoken in generall. And of this kinde of voyce speaketh the Apollle in that place to the Romanes, sayinge : *The same spirit beareth witnesse with our spirit, that wee are the sonnes of God.* Of this confirmation, the same Apostle, speaketh to the Corinht. whē he saith, *As the testimonie of Iesau Christ was confirmed in you.* Which wordes shewe the cleere evidence

Io. 14. 26.

Rō. 8. 15.

1. Cor. 1. 6

of that two fould testimonie of the spirit, whereof wee did speake before: The one, when God writeth his word in our hearts: which heere is vnderstood by the testimonie of Christ. The other, when he seales that which hee hath spoken, and in speaking hath written in our heartes: and that is here vnderstood, by the cōfirming of the testimonie of Iesus in vs. And for this work of cōfirmation, the spirit is called the earnest & seale of God

And as God by his spirit scaleth and confirmeth all the promises in Christ, and also all what hee himselfe hath wrought in vs according to the promise. So among other things, he specially cōfirmeth our Adoption, whē the spirit beareth witnesse to vs, that we are the sonnes of God. After that first he hath effectuellie called vs by teaching vs and working faith in our hearts,

hearts, and also hath made our hearts (now beleeving) speake to vs that we are sonnes.

Thirdly, God is said to speake vnto vs by his spirit, whē he comforted vs in our troubles: removing by his spirit, the anguish and grief of our hearts, & restoring vs to our wonted ioyes in him again. Of which voyce of the spirit, David speaketh whē he prayeth, *Make me heare ioy and gladnesse.* And againe, *Restore me to the ioye of thy salvation, and establisth mee with thy free spirit.* For this worke the spirit is called *the Comforter.*

Psal. 51.8.  
12.

Nowe wee come to the last point: which is the principal thing which yee demaund: and that is, Howe wee shall discern this Testimonie of the Lords spirit, from the testimonie of our owne spirit. And this is to bee done, eyther in the time of peace, or trouble: al-



though it is more difficile in prosperitie, to distinguish them.

There is two voyces of the spirit, as we have saide, which both witnesse our Adoption. The first, when the spirit in vs, speaks to God.

This testimonie of the spirit, is discerned three wayes: The first thing whereby we discern, it is the great heavines of heart and sorrowe which the conscience of sinne breedeth in vs, whē (as saith the Prophet) God having poured vpon vs the spirit of grace and compassion, *Wee looke vppon him whom we have pearſed, and lament for him, as men mourne for their onely begotten sonne: and are sorrie for him, as men are for their first begotten childe.* Of this nature was the mourning of Peter, after his deniall, when (as sayeth the holy scripture) *hee went out, and weeped bitterlie: and because*

Zach. 12.

10.

cause this is a sure token of saving grace, therefore they that mourne are compted blessed. This mourning hath alwayes ioyned with it an hunger & thirst for righteousnes. For ther can be no true mourning for sinne, where there is no desire of righteousnes. And because this is the proper effect of the spirit of grace in all and everie one of those who receyve him.

Therefore doeth the Lord by his Prophet declare what shall be the worke of the spirit of grace and compassion in that day whē God shall poure him out vpon his children, sayinge: *Then shall there bee great mourning at Ierusalem: like as the lamentation of Sadrmmom in the valey of Megiddon, &c.* In which place mourning is attributed to everie familie, to everie state, and everie person, and that apart by themselves, to shewe that it is a com-

Math. 26

75.

Math. 5. 4

Zach. 12.

11.

74 Gods spirit in vs discerned  
common effect wrought by the  
spirit in all Gods children, & that  
vnfainedly.

The second thing whereby we  
discerne this testimonie of the spi-  
rit, is the earnest longing with ve-  
hement grones and sighes in our  
selves for to be with Christ.

Of this voyce of the spirit the  
Apostle speaketh, when he sayeth,  
**Rom.8.23** *Wee also who have the first fruite of  
the spirit, even wee sigh in our selves,  
waying for the adoption. And in an  
other place to the same effect hee  
sayeth, That wee sigh, desiring to bee*  
**2.Cor.5.2** *clothed upon with our house which is  
from heaven.* For certainly, the na-  
turall disposition of a man, can ne-  
ver bring forth this stronge desire  
of heaven, neither yet could the  
renewed heart, beeing yet burde-  
ned with infirmitie and love of  
this life, have so strong a desire of  
removing from it, of it selfe, if the  
spirit



from our owne spirit.

75

spirit did not worke it : and therefore the Apostle attributes these sighes for righteousness & heaven, to the spirit : and doth shewe vs, that *the spirit* ( in these cryes and sighes ) *helpeth our infirmities.* Rom. 8. 26

Thirdly, this testimonie of the spirit is discerned, by the confident requestes and petitions it maketh to God in vs, in the full assurance of faith, without doubting: when with boldnes, wee drawe neare vnto the Throne of grace, crying vpon God, *Abba Father* : and in *all things making our petitions manifest to God,* as sayeth the Apostle. Phil. 4. 6.

For this confident boldnes of the heart, towardes God, still accompanied with reverence and feare, can not be in the heart, except the spirit did worke it. For the boldnes of a blind heart, wanteth both assurance of Gods love, and reverence of his maiestie,

But

But leaving this, wee come to the discerning of the other voyce, which more properly is called the testimonie of the spirit : speciallie in that place to the Romans. And that is, when God in vs, speaketh by his spirit vnto vs.

This testimonie is to be discerned, from the testimonie of our hearte, three manner of wayes. First, in our first beleeuings. Secondly, after wee have beleued. Thidly, in the eclipses of our faith, and in our troubles.

In our first beleeuings, wee may discern the testimonie of Gods spirit, from our owne, touchinge our Adoption : because our first beleeuings, is ever by the testimonie of the spirit, and not by the testimonie of our owne heart. For our heart can never beare witnes to vs, that wee are the sonnes of God, vntill first our heartes have beleued,

from our owne spirit.

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beleaved, that wee are his sonnes.  
and this our hearts can not do, ex-  
cept the spirit, have first wrought  
this faith, by the worde, in our  
hearts. Therefore, my first beleefe  
and assurance of my Adoption, is  
alwayes the testimonie of the spi-  
rit of God, and my owne hearts te-  
stimonie, must still followe vpon  
this: so that in mans heart, the  
voyce that maketh it first cōcrye  
Gods love, and beleefe it, is the  
spirits testimonie: which, when  
the heart of man hath receyved,  
then it speaketh. For till it beleefe,  
it can not speake: according as it  
is written: *I have beleaved, and* Psal. 116.  
*therefore I have spoken.* Thus then 10.  
is this testimonie first discerned: 2. Cor. 4.  
when I discern, the voyce of the 13.  
spirit, which I beleefe, from the  
voyce of my spirit, now beleving,  
and bearing witnes to me, of that,  
which first, the spirit of God did  
wit-



witnes to it.

Secondlie, after we have beleev-  
ed, wee may also discern the te-  
stimonie of Gods spirit, from the  
testimonie of our owne spirit, by  
a plaine contrarie order. For in  
the former, the spirites testimonie  
did goe before, the testimonie of  
our spirit: but heere, it followeth  
after it: and is the confirmation of  
it. So that, when after wee have  
beleevd the spirit, speakinge the  
word vnto vs, and after that belee-  
ving, wee have spoken with our  
owne spirit: if then wee heare a  
new voyce, cōfirming that which  
we beleevd, and which our spi-  
rit did speake: that cōfirming, sea-  
ling, and stablishing voyce, is the  
testimonie of Gods spirit. Thus  
wee must learne to discern, be-  
twixt our beleeving, and the con-  
firmation of our belief: and so shal  
wee know, the testimonie of Gods  
spirit,

spirit, from the testimonie of our owne spirit. Therefore still the holie Scriptures of God, distinguish betwixt the worke of God, in making vs receyve the testimonie of his spirit, and his worke, in confirming in vs, that testimonie nowe receyved. And also teacheth vs, to knowe the testimonie of our own spirit (which commeth in betwixt these two) to bee different, from them both. Accordinge to this working of God, the Saints pray, *Stablish O God, that which thou hast wrought in vs.* Psal. 68. 28

To speake more plainly of this point, there is a three folde voyce in the heart that hath the testimonie of Iesus confirmed in it. The first is the voyce of God by his spirit in the worde speaking vnto our hearts, and perswading them to beleeve that the promise belongeth vnto vs.

The

30 *Gods spirit in vs discerned*

The second voyce is the voyce of our hearts receyving the word wherby it speaketh that which the spirit hath perswaded, and this in effect is nothing but the very faith of the heart now actually working in vs. Whereas the first was the worke of the spirit working this faith in vs : so that in this first act we are patients, in the other we are agentes: in the first we are spoken too by the spirit of God, in the seconde, our owne heartes speaketh in vs. The third voice is the voyce of Gods spirit following the voyce of our hearts ratifying it : and this is nothing els but the confirmation of our faith . So wee may see that the Lord performeth twoo workes in vs for our comfort : the first is, the working of faith & beleife: the other is the confirmation of the faith, which he him selfe did work. But before his last work,  
our



*from our owne spirit*

14

Our hearts having faith wrought in them, doe worke by it, or wee with our hearts worke: and this is nothing but beleeving with the heart, or the hearts beleevinge.

Wherevpon followeth the sealing of vs in that which it beleeueth, that is, in the testimonie which the beleeving heart giveth of him in whom it is.

Thirdlie, we discern this testimonie of the spirit, in our trouble: when we find any cōfort, or peace wrought in our hearts, when they are troubled: or anie ioye, vpon the assurance of Gods love. If wee finde a quiet calmnesse of minde, with patience, meeknes, and reioycing in tribulation, vpon anie sight or knowledge of our Adoption: all these are the vndoubted testimonies of the spirit: who shedding abroad the love of God

F

in

12 Gods spirit in vs discerned

Heb. 10.

Act. 5. 41.

in our hearts, maketh vs to reioyce  
in affliction: as the Apost. speaketh  
of the Hebrues, *and ye suffered with  
gladnes the spoyling of your goods,  
knowing in your selues that yee have  
in heauen a better, and an enduring  
substance.* And touching the Apo-  
stles, it is saide, *They departed reioy-  
cing that they were compied worthie  
to suffer for his Name.* That this ioy,  
is the work of the spirit, vpon the  
testimonie of Gods love, is mani-  
fest by the Apost. to the Romans,  
where shewing the cause, why we  
reioyce in afflictions, sayth, *Because  
of the love of God which is shed ab-  
road in our heartes, by the holy spirit  
which is given vs.* According to  
this ground it is, that the Saints  
are brought in, wayting what God  
will speake to them in trouble: as  
namely in the Psalme 85. vers. 8.  
*I will hearken what the Lord will say.*

con.

from our owne spirit. 83

concerning mee: for hee shall speake  
peace vnto his people, and to his saints.

And the Prophet Habacuk in like  
manner is brought in saying thus:

*I will stande vpon my watch, and see  
mee vpon the Towre, and will looke  
and see what hee will say vnto mee.*

Thus whē God speaketh peace to  
the Saints in affliction, and quie-  
teth their thoughtes, and maketh  
them heare ioye and gladnes, that  
is the testimonie of the spirit of  
the Lord, who is our onely Com-  
forter. For as sayeth the Prophet

David, *My flesh and my heart faileth:  
but God is the strength of my heart.*

Psal. 73.  
25.

And therefore Moses prayeth: *O  
satisfie vs with thy mercie, so shall wee  
reioyce and be glad all our dayes, com-  
fort vs againe, &c.*

Psal. 90.  
14. 15.

We may hold it  
for a most certaine trueth, that our  
patient enduring of grievous tri-  
alls ioyfully, the constant peace

F 2 of



of God in our hearts, in the tyme when wee endure the enimitie of the world: the cōsolations, where with we are comforted, in all our afflictions, are vndoubted testimonies of our Adoption, proceeding all from Gods spirit.

But all this is most cleerlie discerned, when the testimonie of Gods spirit, and the testimonie of our spirit, are seperate the one from the other: & when they are found to speake one against the other: and to give two contrarie testimonies. For while these two goe together, and are not severed or disagreeing: it is oft tymes hard to discern the one from the other. But if we can finde them seperate, so that the one faile vs, and the other vphold vs, then may they cleerly bee discerned. And this commeth to passe, eyther when  
God

God vpon the carnall presumption of our hearts, suffereth vs to fall in some dangerous triall. or then, when God him selfe seemeth to become our enemie: so that the heart hath to wrestle with G O D him selfe, vnder the sense of his wrath, all former feeling of his mercie then ceasing.

Of the first, wee have example in Peter, whose heart saide vnto him, that no danger could make him forsake Christ the Lorde, to make him know, that this was not the testimonie of Gods spirit: but a carnall confidence of his owne heart, suffered him to be tried, and in the triall to fall: and so to finde, it was but his owne carnall heart, that did beare witnes to him. God oft tymes for this cause tryeth his owne children: to make them discern, betwixt the confidence

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F 3

and

and assurance which their owne hearts giveth them, and that confidence and comfort which the spirit of God worketh in them: that they may not trust in themselves, or in their owne hearts, but in the living God. This the Apostle witnesseth to the Corinthians, **2 Cor. I.** saying: *He maketh vs to receyve the sentence of death in our selves, because we should not trust in our selves but in God which raiseih the dead.*

Of the second, wee have example in *David* and in *Iob*. And this discerning of the spirits testimonie is two folde, one is by the voyce of the spirit in vs, vnto God, when our hearts speake the contrarie. The other is, by the voyce of the spirit vnto vs, whē our owne hearts saith otherwayes.

Of the first *David* is an example: who in his prosperitie saide,  
hee



from our owne spirit. 87

hee should never bee moved : Yet Psal. 31. 2.  
when God did hyde his face, his  
heart fayled him: and he saide in  
his haste, *I am cast out of thy sight.*  
and yet hee presently addeth these  
wordes : *neverthelesse thou heardest  
the voyce of my prayer.* Heere wee  
may perceyve Davids owne heart,  
saying, hee was cast out of Gods  
sight : but yet the spirit of GOD,  
maketh request vnto God for him,  
and maketh him pray to God in  
faith, as not reiected of God : and  
the Lord did heare him. This him  
selfe sheweth plainlie, in an other  
place, when he sayeth : *I beleevd,* Psal. 116.  
*and therefore I spake : but I was sore* 10.  
*troubled, I saide in my haste, All men  
are liars.* At this time, David com-  
passed with the snares of death, &  
holden by the griefes of the grave,  
finding trouble and heavines, de-  
clares the estate of his owne heart:

that it said, that all men are liars and therefore he gathers this conclusion, that albeit his owne heart did say, that Gods promise should not bee accomplished: yet doubtlesse he behoved to have faith: because he prayed. For except hee had beleevved, he had not spoken. And what can bee more cleere, to let vs see, Gods spirit bearing witness, that God hath not forsaken vs, when our owne hearts say the contrarie. Then when by witnessing this, the spirit causeth vs, against the distrust of our owne hearts, to pray to God: evē above hope, yet vnder hope, trusting in the Lord, as did Abraham. If we examine our selves, what hath bene the estate of our hearts, in the like (or at least in our greatest temptations) wee shall finde, that many tymes, when our harts hath  
spo-

spoken no comfort vnto vs: yet the spirit of God, hath drawen sighes and cries to God, out of our hearts: which also our God hath heard most graciouſlie. These cries are testimonies of the spirit, witnessing to vs, that wee are the sonnes of God: when as they proceed from vs, our hearts saying the contrarie.

Of the second kinde of the spirits voyce, in speaking from God vnto vs: wee have likewise example in *David*, when his owne heart said vnto God, *Why hast thou forgotten me?* Behold an other voyce speakinge vnto his heart in that same tyme, *Why art thou vexed O my soule, and why art thou so disquieted within mee? O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give him thanks, he is my helpe and my God.* Heere the heart speaking no comfort, but being



being wholly discouraged, and cast  
 downe : the spirit of God in that  
 same heart, speaketh to the heart,  
 and comforteth it, with this, that  
 God was his God . Nowe, that  
 these consolations are the worke  
 and testimonie of Gods spirit, it  
 appeareth by that reason, which  
 David giveth, when hee boasteth  
 in strong cōfidence, that although  
 hee should walke through the va-  
 ley of the shadowe of death, yet  
 would hee feare none evill, say-  
 ing : *For thou art with mee, thy rod  
 and thy staffe they comfort mee.* By  
 these wordes declaring, that the  
 experiēce he had of the comfort,  
 which Gods spirit did minister vn-  
 to him, in his most desperate trou-  
 bles past, even then when his  
 owne spirit did faile him, was the  
 ground of al his cōfidence against  
 all future trialls.

*Psal. 23.*

We

Wee have an example also of this in *Iob*, Who when his owne heart reasoned, that God had hid his face from him, and taken him for his enemy: yet hee saith, *Although hee slaye mee, yet will I trust in him, hee shalbe my salvation.* Heere two different speeces in one heart: the one from the spirit of *Iob*: the other from the spirit of the Lord in *Iob*. The one, perswading that God was his salvation, when the other saide, God had hid his face from him.

Thus if wee would cleerlie discern, the testimonie of Gods spirit, from the testimonie of our owne spirit, let vs beholde our selves, when God tryeth vs, rather then when he maketh our mountaine to stande stronge, or when hee doeth wrestle with vs himselfe, as he did with *Jacob*: and in  
see

seeminge to fight against vs, yet  
doeth sustaine vs, by his owne  
strength in vs, when our strength  
faileth vs.

Thus I have as distinctlie as I  
could, and therefore somewhat  
more largelie, then an epistle per-  
haps requireth, given you such sa-  
tisfaction to your question, as it  
hath pleased the Lorde to grante  
me light. If you finde any com-  
fort thereby, you shall thank God  
for it: And what is wanting in it,  
for your full satisfaction in this  
matter, the Lord shall supplie it by  
his owne spirit: or by that suffici-  
encie of grace, which hee hath gi-  
ven vnto others his servants, who  
he shall raise vp to write more ful-  
lie of this matter: for the edificati-  
on of his Saints, in this and all o-  
ther thinges, I pray the Lord to  
give



from our owne spirit.

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give you and vs all, his everlasting  
peace throught Christ **IESVS**  
our Saviour, reveyling more and  
more the mysterie of godlinesse  
in your hearts, and makinge you  
abound in all knowledge with  
faith, feeling, and ioy of the holy  
Ghost. The grace of the  
Lord **IESVS** bee with  
you, and all the  
Brethren,

**A M E N.**

*Io. Forbes;*

